

PROBABLE ACTION ON THE PARIS ACCORDS IN THE FRENCH
COUNCIL OF THE REPUBLIC

I. Council of the Republic expected to approve Paris accords:

A. Action likely by late February.

1. Constitutionally, Council must act within two months after transmittal of measure from Assembly (by 11 Mar 55).

B. Last fall, Mendes-France optimistically predicted 200 favorable out of 319 membership.

1. Mechanical projection of Assembly vote according to party makeup of Council would give better than absolute majority (170 over 160).

C. Instead, simple plurality now seems more likely.

1. Assembly action showed many more abstentions than expected.

2. Since Council's smaller Communist membership means smaller vote flatly against bill, more non-Communist Senators may feel it safe to abstain without risking bill's defeat.

D. Paris press still considers situation favorable.

1. According to press, rapporteurs named by Council committees--unlike some in Assembly--are all favorable to accords.

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11. Technically possible for Council to delay approval until end of June--by amending it, which would automatically force Assembly reconsideration and permit Council to delay final Assembly decision for 100 days. However:
- A. Council not expected to amend the accords.
 - B. No reason to expect Council to adopt dilatory tactics.
 - C. But little likelihood that Council would adopt rush procedure.
 - D. Council could raise constitutional question, but danger is remote:
 - E. Under constitutional revision of 30 Nov '64, Council can no longer oblige Assembly to muster an absolute majority in order to override similar majority in Council.